

# THE GREEN CALDRON

A Magazine of Freshman Writing



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# Hero Worship

GENE BRUCKER

*Rhetoric II, Theme 9, 1941-1942*

**H**ERO WORSHIP IS CHARACTERISTIC OF SMALL BOYS. Every youth has his particular hero—or heroes—whom he idolizes and whom he tries to resemble in every way possible. Heroes of the more adventurous professions—soldiers, cowboys, and Indian fighters—are generally preferred, and such men as Buffalo Bill, Tom Mix, and Jesse James enjoy great popularity. When I was a boy, we played games in which we could each impersonate our heroes.

One man, whose identity I never disclosed to anyone, was my personal idol. He is not very well-known, and I've often wondered why I chose him instead of someone more illustrious. Perhaps it was his name—General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard. I had and still have a weakness for French names. General Beauregard was a Confederate general of noble French Creole ancestry, who fulfilled all my romantic expectations as to what an ideal man should be.

But I think the main reason I selected him as my number one hero was an article in a set of volumes in our small grade school library. History was the only grade school subject that I ever loved. I devoured every history book in the whole school building. One set of four volumes that I found consisted of biographical sketches of American heroes, vivid accounts of famous battles, descriptions of important events of American history, and exciting passages of conversation that spiced the narration of these incidents. (I later suspected that the conversation was surreptitiously inserted by an overzealous author.) In one of these volumes, I found an account of the life and deeds of Pierre Beauregard. It was similar in style and content to the other grade school history books that I read. Beauregard was vividly painted as a great man and gallant soldier who fought for the principles in which he believed. No hint was given of any fault he might have had or of anything he might have done wrong.

My imagination was fired with enthusiasm for this man, and when I went across the fields after the cows in the autumn twilight, I was General Beauregard, with my rifle and sword (made of wood), riding to lead my troops to victory at Bull Run. Or I would creep along the bank of the Potomac (a small dredge ditch that ran through our pasture) to reconnoiter the positions of the enemy. Again, I charged forth out of a forest (any convenient cornfield) with my cavalry to rout the enemy at Shiloh. With my Colt revolver (a cap pistol), I would fight with my men in the trenches (plow furrows), defending the city of Charleston. But the most dramatic

scene took place when General Johnston and I surrendered our swords to General Sherman, and thus put an end to all organized resistance in the South. I remember the great speech that I gave as I turned over my sword to my imaginary conqueror.

This picture of General Beauregard is typical of the ideas about American heroes that my history readings and my vivid imagination created. Famous American heroes were pictured as men who could do no wrong, and every action of our government was held to be blameless. On the other hand, infamous characters, such as Benedict Arnold and leaders of the enemy, were pictured as little better than ogres; furthermore, countries hostile to America were represented as always in the wrong. Thus, I came to possess a beautiful, although not a very accurate, picture of our country.

Most of my illusions were shattered when I entered high school. The high school library offered endless opportunity for reading history, and I soon took advantage of it. The high school board had been progressive enough to purchase some history books that were as critical and as analytic as they were informative. It is almost impossible to describe the sensation that I experienced when I read, among other things, that such staunch and virtuous patriots as Samuel Adams and John Hancock were smugglers and rumrunners, that George Washington was inclined to tip the bottle a little too often, and that General Grant was a failure in life before the Civil War and when finally placed in command often took a few days off to get "rip-roaring drunk." However, my biggest shock came when I read that my personal hero, General Beauregard, was a small, weak, sickly man who, although courageous and a good defensive fighter, was poor in strategy and offense. Furthermore, after the war was over, he refused positions as commander-in-chief of the Egyptian and Rumanian armies in order to become president of a Louisiana railroad!

I also discovered that it was Benedict Arnold who, traitor though he was, was largely responsible for France's entering the Revolution, because of his decisive victory at Saratoga. Arnold went over to the British only after a narrow-minded and politically corrupt Congress had repeatedly refused to recognize his services and give him a higher army commission. Further reading disclosed the fact that our American government had fought two wars with weaker nations for imperialistic reasons, and that our great and noble government's foreign policy during the greater part of the last century was, "Get what you can, and to hell with everybody else."

Theoretically, hero worship may be a beautiful and an ideal thing for a child, and parents probably encourage it. But sooner or later every child is due for a jolt, when he discovers that his heroes aren't ideal and perfect. He experiences much the same feeling as when his parents tell him that there is no Santa Claus. I think it is the duty of the home and school to control the build-up so that the let-down won't be too hard.



# Defeatism in Aztec Philosophy

MARY ANN PICKREL

*Rhetoric II, Theme 7, 1941-1942*

BELOW THE RIO GRANDE STRETCHES THE BROODING sphinx we call Mexico, her graven paws of Yucatan licked by the sparkling waters of the Caribbean, her subtle, unfathomable gaze fixed in stoic passivity upon the broken, stained altars, the still majestic temples, and the lofty, grass-grown pyramids which bespeak an ancient and vanquished splendor. In the ironic gaze of those cold stone eyes lurks all the seductive fascination of a bloody, savage and fanatical past, of a past whose secret lies like a dream upon the sad countenances of thousands of modern Indians. Even the sun-warmed waters of the Caribbean cannot wash the dark stains from the paws of the sphinx, nor can Time strengthen the submission or lighten the lethargy of the *peon* who once learned to link the experience of joy with pain and with death. The seed of the continuing subjectivity of the Mexican Indian of today, as well as the reason for the success of the conquistador Hernando Cortes in the sixteenth century, are discovered in the dark and tragic mood of ancient Aztec history.

The place, the eastern coast of Mexico, which was to see the founding of a struggling little city named Veracruz; the year, 1519; the man, a crude, blustering, opportunistic, avaricious, poverty-stricken soldier-of-fortune; the cry, a ringing "For Gold, Glory, and God—and the King of Spain!" Such is the setting of the drama which rang down the curtain upon one of the most complex, intricate, and significant civilizations this planet has known. From the humid coast to the cool, flower-strewn temples of the white-marble island city, Tenochtitlan, swift runners brought the news to the Aztec emperor. Strange white gods who came over the waters in fantastic craft, from the mystic direction of the East, who bestrode horrible, shaggy-maned monsters of prodigious size and strength, and pointed at their enemies magic wands which commanded the forces of thunder and the lightning which kills! Montezuma, the Aztec emperor, that supreme vassal of superstition, typical of his people, and possessed of a rather weak and vacillating character, was confused and terrified by the momentous tidings, and yet thrilled to the depths of his profoundly religious soul. From the legends of Mexico the eager subjects of the sovereign snatch the story of the lost god "Quetzalcoatl," he who, like these strangers, was to return in triumph to rule, and who—again like the Spanish—was to be tall and white, like the Sun himself, and possessed of long hair and quaint bristles upon his chin. While the credulous minds of the Aztecs considered this miracle, the European invader, Hernando Cortes, was leading a few score men, a dozen

horses, and some outmoded cannon into the mosquito-infested interior along the eastern lowlands.<sup>1</sup>

Much to his convenience, Cortes found the organization of the Aztec nation to be feudalistically decentralized, and to be very much in the control of the priesthood. Each *calpulli*, or clan, governed itself, and guarded this right vigorously, although it sent a representative to a democratic chief council which decided affairs of importance for the nation as a whole. The emperor could not, for example, declare war on an enemy for all his peoples without the unanimous consent of the council. The independence of the *calpulli*, and the fact that each was ruled by a kind of village priest, discouraged the formation of national feeling and traditions, and fostered religious influence.<sup>2</sup>

Wars among the Aztecs, or against neighboring nations, were fought with the aim of catching prisoners for sacrifice, not for political reasons. Even tribal selfhood was weak against the all-powerful urge to *create* life on the altar of a bloody god, for only in return for lives given did the gods consent to allow mortals to partake of life-giving substances themselves, rain and sunshine. These had to be paid for in blood—red blood for the thirsty gods. And the blood of brave men, taken in these “flowered wars,” was more pleasing than any other. The first nation which Cortes fought was not the Aztec but the Tlaxcalteca, who lay between him and the lovely, flower-like capital on Lake Texcoco. The men of Tlaxcala made a show of resistance, but did they really resist? Their attitude even at the beginning was not that of defenders of their homelands meeting a foreign invader. They, like the Aztecs later, went down before the Spanish “in a conflict of ambivalent feeling that was like the confusion of love”<sup>3</sup>—they fought in the spirit of the “flowered wars,” not to destroy but to win these fantastically valiant and beautiful, these strange and exotic white men for their altars, and the pleasure of their gods. They lusted to capture them alive, and fearlessly, in their fanaticism, they forgot to concentrate on self-defense. They could have wiped out the puny forces of the invader if they had wanted to. But as they failed to conquer them living, the warriors of Tlaxcala ceased entirely to wish them dead. They joined Cortes as allies against the Aztecs.

And the Aztecs, what of those submissive, dark yearning souls, who “toiled in a dark world, whose highest light was death and whose diurnal light was the release in sensual or aesthetic ecstasy”?<sup>4</sup> Indoctrinated with the cult of self-extinction as they were, mad worshippers of the rites of priests who filled the smoking temples with hundreds of thousands of piled human skulls and uncounted inches of dried human blood, why should they fear the

<sup>1</sup>Prescott, William, *Conquest of Mexico*, pp. 39, 139-46.

<sup>2</sup>Simpson, Eyler, *The Ejido—Mexico's Way Out*, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Frank, Waldo, *America Hispana: South of Us*, p. 223.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 224.



stranger who at worst could bring them only what they cherished—death—and at best might bless them with the hope of happiness, if he were really Quetzalcoatl, their god returning from the East?

So Montezuma sent envoys to Cortes and welcomed into his marvelous city, with gifts befitting a god, the tired, ragged, amazed little company of Spanish adventurers. And later, under strange psychological compulsion, when the Aztecs became disgusted with the ungodlike lust for gold and other crude passions of the white men, Montezuma resisted so feebly that he allowed himself to be taken prisoner without a battle, and paid numerous and ineffectual ransoms.<sup>5</sup>

Few students realize the simple explanation of the belief of the Aztecs in the godlike qualities of the white invaders. One reason for the downfall of Montezuma's empire is certainly the perfect, though chance, timing of Cortes when he landed at Veracruz in the exact year of 1519, or year *Ce Acatl* on the Aztec calendar. This was actually the year of Quetzalcoatl, the very year which the priests of antiquity had declared in legend would produce the return of the god to govern all Mexico with a kind and benign rule. Quetzalcoatl is only the Aztec explanation of the actions of the planet Venus, which at times appears as an evening star, then disappears and returns as a morning star. During his absence, Quetzalcoatl, or Venus, is supposed to be visiting the land of the dead, the underworld, where in return for undergoing various scourging "proofs" he is taught many useful tricks of science and art to be passed on to his people. Quetzalcoatl probably originated as a cultured and enlightened, and much beloved, Aztec emperor who left behind him the gifts of an industrial genius. Religion, however, transformed him, with its usual deft propaganda, into the mystic being who had abandoned the "land of black and red," the West, where the black of night and the red of dying day unite, to sail away over the sea in a skiff of serpent skins. His promise to return from the East, like a morning star preceding the Sun, could not fail to cause the Aztecs to regard Cortes as the god, bent upon governing once more the Toltec kingdom he had abandoned.<sup>6</sup>

But the main reason for the defeatism of the Aztecs and the conquest which they suffered may be called the debasing religious and social institutions of the people, which had been derived mainly from a fanatical sacerdotal control of superstition and sadistic fatalism. The Aztecs were surprised by Cortes in that state of barbarity and sophistication, that mixture of cruelty and culture, that identification of pain with beauty, that afflicts virile, sombre-souled nations in the clutch of spiritual excess. One notices somewhat the same attitude in the Inquisition of Spain, where torture and murder were likewise exalted, and, as in Mexico, the gentler forces of cul-

<sup>5</sup>Prescott, *op. cit.*, Chapt. III.

<sup>6</sup>Caso, Alfonso, *La religion de los aztecas*, pp. 18-19.

ture and creation were smothered by the coarseness and fanaticism of natures grown used to scenes of blood and violence sanctified by the church.<sup>7</sup> The degrading habit of slavery was also practiced by Aztec land-owners, and Aztec priests ate the palpitating hearts of the sacrificial victims newly killed, after which they gave the rest of the body to the market-place for purposes of symbolistic revelry. Human flesh was eaten as a sacred experience.

The control of the priests over every detail of the daily lives, as well as the philosophy, of the people, was air-tight. Even the emperor was a humble temple servant, and often surrendered his opinion to the priests. He felt honored to enter the sacred domain of the temple. The priests, with the wily cunning of the Nazis, took charge of the younger generation, and trained young priests and priestesses in the black ceremonies of the faith. Girls learned to care for and decorate the temples, boys learned monastic routine, and both received into their souls the terrible cult of death which had spread the gloom of pessimism over their land.<sup>8</sup> The priests were the land-owners in old Mexico as in the modern—they possessed huge landed estates on which impoverished laymen were laborers. "The temple lands . . . were greatly extended; a special class of serfs had to be dedicated to their exploitation and to the support of the very considerable sacerdotal class. The evidence shows that the nobles, overlords, chiefs, priests, and other privileged persons, by the time of the Conquest were a large and growing group . . . the landless peon was a definitely established social class. . . . Debt, slavery, the poverty of the disinherited and the arrogance of the privileged were known in Mexico before the coming of the Spaniards; abjectness, humility, and servility were not lessons which the masses of the Mexican people learned for the first time at the knee of Cortes and his successors."<sup>9</sup> Absolution by the priest was acceptable in Mexico in place of legal punishment for offences. One of the means by which the church wielded its power over the masses who lived under its spell of superstition was its supposed knowledge of the future argued through the practice of astrology and divination. As pointed out before, cultural activities were either smothered or, in many cases, strictly supervised by the church. Hieroglyphical paintings, sculpture, and oral traditions were done under church supervision, and certainly in the cases of the first two the modern tourist can find little to criticize. Music and the art of telling stories through dancing and reciting were features of the religious festivals which witnessed the bloody sacrifices so common to church ceremonies.

The main, most striking feature about these sacrifices was that they were not accompanied by any unsophisticated, savage lust for blood connected

<sup>7</sup>Moreno, Manuel M., *La organizacion politica y social de los Aztecas*, pp. 49-78.

<sup>8</sup>Prescott, *op. cit.*, Chapt. III.

<sup>9</sup>Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 6.



with the emotions of hunger or rage in battle, but by a superstitious, melancholy fanaticism, a mystic tenderness, crowned at the last by an ecstasy still tinged by sadness, devoid of the fire which characterizes ambitious Christianity, devoid of illogical hopes for a future life, entirely passive, stoically unresisting the omnipotent will of the gods. In this gentle, primitive impassiveness lies the strength which through the centuries of Spanish occupation has permitted the downtrodden Indian to suffer his lot and yet live—it has been his salvation, and yet it was the initial cause of his downfall. The tragedy of the Aztec surely wrings the hearts of even his own stern gods.

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#### Old Ford

There stood what appeared to be a refugee from the Townsend Plan, but the salesman assured us that it was a twenty-nine Ford and that it ran too. It sort of crouched on its four wheels like an old sway-backed horse that is willing but not able. Each one of its wheels sat at a different angle. The windshield had been shattered at one time and had been glued back together. The tires were as smooth as billiard balls, and the radiator grill had obviously experienced a few head-on collisions. After the car had been pushed around the block several times, the motor started up with a sound like a drum and bugle corps, and we lurched away in our twenty-dollar investment.—ALVIN QUINN

#### Marvelous

When Dottie, Betty, and I met in Urbana to begin a new phase of our life, we knew absolutely nothing about each other. Before many hours passed, however, my roommates knew that I made noise, that Dottie disliked most foods, and that Betty thought everything was simply *marvelous*. Please note that I said everything. We had marvelous food, her friends gave her a marvelous farewell shower, the campus was marvelous, it was marvelous weather, and she was making marvelous friends who could do marvelous things. When she was especially impressed with something, the syllables of the poor, overworked word were drawn out endlessly, and her voice soared up to high C sharp on the first syllable. Just try saying "ma-a-a-rrrr-ve-louss" in the manner described. Blood-curdling isn't it?—MARY ELLEN ALLARD

# Here's the Hot Tamale Man

RICHARD WILLIAM BALL

*Rhetoric I, Theme 10, 1941-1942*

THE NIGHT WAS STILL AND HOT. THE SOFTBALL GAME of the evening was ended, and the park lights were out. I sat on our front porch, vainly searching for a little breeze to dry my sweaty brow. Whether it was the heat or the humidity made little difference. I was just plain hot. Suddenly I heard faint singing in the distance. It grew louder. Gradually it became distinguishable; and finally I could hear, "*Here's the hot tamale man.*"

. . . . .

Cairo, Illinois, was founded as a river trading post and landing port. As it grew, its whole life centered around its rivers, the Mississippi and the Ohio—the friendly rivers that bore the heavily-laden steamers, the muddy rivers that gave forth catfish, the pleasant rivers that furnished a cool swim or a delightful afternoon's boating, the angry rivers that swept away everything in their paths. For protection from the floods, there were built levees and more levees to meet each rise in the rivers. Although not for seventy-five years has Cairo been flooded, still today the levees are being heightened to meet the anticipated rises in the rivers, for each flood seems to rise higher than the previous ones. The rivers were developed to meet new volumes of commerce near the end of the nineteenth century. Wharves and landings and warehouses were built to keep pace with the demands of the increased activity. But river commerce was eclipsed by the rise of the railroads. Today the once-busy wharves and docks have been towed away or dismantled. The large warehouses along Ohio Street have practically been abandoned. One fortunate structure has been taken over as a W.P.A. office building and is destined to have a few years added to its life. A couple of others are used as warehouses for storing groceries, and a fourth is a machine shop. But the business district has moved away from the river front one block west to Commercial Avenue.

. . . . .

"HERE'S THE HOT TAMALE MAN!" The words fairly boomed in my ears, for the hot tamale man was now only a block away. The hot tamale man is an old Negro who makes his living by making tamales during the day and selling them during the evenings. "HERE'S THE HOT TAMALE MAN—TWO FOR A NICKEL AND—FOUR FOR A DI-I-IME—IF-YOU-DON'T-GET-E-NOUGH—JUST-KEEP-ON-A-TRY-Y-IN'." The tune runs from its beginning E flat up to A flat and then back to D. Every line is sung to the same tune, with slurs to take care of extra syllables.



Strangely enough, the words really seem to rhyme. And because the tune is in a minor key and very monotonous, it makes a lasting impression on the hearer's ear. A little pickaninny runs down the street to buy some tamales. At first one wonders why he wants tamales on a night like this. He could have got ice cream with his nickel. But he is charmed by the magic cry, just as the rats of Hamlin were enchanted by the music of the Pied Piper. There is a whole flock of followers, just as there was when the hot tamale man started vending years ago. One follower chants to the now-familiar strain, "PUT THEM IN THE GARBAGE CAN." All laugh, just as all laughed years ago when this line was first inserted into his chant by another young admirer. "HERE'S THE HOT TAMALE MAN."

. . . .

Today the rivers of Cairo are largely under government development. With national defense shipping, the volume of river traffic has increased very much. Every day barges filled with yellow sulfur go up the Ohio, and barges filled with dirty aluminum ore go up the Mississippi. Automobiles and tractors are sent past Cairo. Oil tankers, sinking to capacity depth, float slowly by. The government has a constant corps of dredge boats and "snag yankers" on duty at all times. The levees have been built up to an all-time high of sixty-three feet above standard gauge. Spill-ways and channel-changes help alleviate part of the danger in times of flood. Cairo, say the government engineers, is too important to be swallowed by the rivers. It is important as a transportation and communication center for east and west, north and south connections. Much important weather data is determined in this region and transmitted to all parts of the country. In the event of an attack on this country, Cairo, the engineers say, would be ideal as a field base for operations. With an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, the government is fighting against floods for the possession of Cairo. The rivers have been the past of Cairo, and may be its future. More and more do men see the mighty rivers as a modern transportation means. The railroads formerly flourished, but now, with trucking lines growing, their power is waning. And rivers furnish an economical means for carrying heavy, non-perishable goods. Someday the dusty warehouses may again be filled to capacity. Someday the river fronts may again be lined with wharves and docks. And someday large steamboats may even outnumber the canoes and the motorboats that sport the waves every Sunday afternoon. But in any event Cairo will always depend upon, yet fear, the mighty rivers.

. . . .

*"Here's the hot tamale man. Better get them while you can!"* The song is fading now, for he is blocks away. Yet, by listening closely, I can still hear this chant occasionally piercing the hushed closeness of the summer evening. The heat is still terrible, and the sweat still rolls down my forehead. It is so hard to be comfortable on a hot summer night. . . .

# Est Modus in Rebus; or, Point Counter Point

ANDREW DENNIS

*Rhetoric I, Theme 13, 1941-1942*

THAT THERE IS A GOLDEN MEAN IN ALL THINGS, ESPECIALLY in living, is the idea that Huxley pounds into us in *Point Counter Point*. He is concerned with this purpose, not with the involvements of plot; with civilization as a whole, not with isolated groups: with people as types, and not as individuals. For the major portion of the book, Mr. Huxley tells mankind to be "noble savages," "intelligent primitives"—perfect animals and perfect humans combined. Finally, when we are almost ready to give up, he becomes specific and tells us, through the character Rampion, that if man tries to become something better than what he is in nature, he kills something within himself and becomes less. Rampion gathers it together for us neatly when he says that man is a creature balanced on a tightrope with his mind and spirit and consciousness at one end of a pole and all that is unconscious and earthly and mysterious at the other end. He concludes that this balance is the only perfect absolute that man can ever really know. Huxley's characters are created and built around this central purpose, to illustrate it and to prove it. He does an admirable job!

Let us take his characters, who are indeed fantastic, and see how he blends them into a unity that leaves his thought standing out clearly as a cloud before a summer sunset. First we have Spandrell of the Oedipus complex, jealous that his mother had married a major of whom he had heard such terrible stories. He wreaks his vengeance on women in general, reducing their ego to a dangerous point, humiliating them and deliberately destroying what they hold most important. Rampion, whom we shall meet later, called him the "morality-philosophy pervert." Spandrell tries to live outside himself, to be more than a man, and as a consequence, destroys himself. John Bidlake, although a pathetic remnant of the great artist he had once been, has lived the real human life with nothing to regret. He is the character that exists solely on the earthy, unconscious end of Rampion's pole. Despite the fact that Bidlake is childlike in his queer system of superstitions and a little ridiculous in his old age, I think Huxley definitely prefers him to Phillip Quarles. In Quarles, cold and unfeeling as he is, we have the ultimate in non-humanness, the man who knows and understands everything and yet feels nothing. Although probably inherently intellectual,



Quarles is pushed further into the realm of the intellectual by the accident to his leg during childhood. Huxley cleverly uses Quarles' notebook to introduce his own thinking. He shows Quarles musing over the axiom of the intellectualist, "that there is an intrinsic superiority in mental, conscious, voluntary life over the physical, instinctive, emotional life," and deciding that his course ends up with the obvious fact which the nonintellectuals have never left: that intellectualism is just another escape, like movies and drink, that it is child's play compared with having personally satisfying relations with one's fellow men. Quarles is termed an "intellectual-aesthetic pervert" by Rampion. The next pervert is Burlap, who somehow combines asceticism and promiscuity in his actions and in so doing becomes something apart from the two, something very revolting. He is hypocritical and tries to tie in all his actions with religion. Rampion calls him the "pure little Jesus pervert." Illidge is a laboratory assistant who rose from the masses; as a result he is a communist, warped on the importance of money.

Now we have Rampion—normality at long last! His words strike like lightning through the pages of the book, briefly illuminating the way, only to be blacked out in the confusion of the words and thoughts of his associates. Here is the "golden mean" that Huxley so desires us to emulate. Rampion rages against the non-humanness of people in religion, in morality, in the intellect, in science, and in industry. He says, "The world is an asylum of perverts." I think he has a good, strong case. His noble savagery is earned through effort and does not come naturally as does his wife Mary's. He has been brought up by a religious and virtuous mother and taught to deny the physical side of his being. He is fortunate to have met Mary, who lives by her drives and emotions. She balances his outlook so that he can draw what is real and vital from the religion of his mother and combine it with the physiological drives of his being that are just as real and vital. Here is the man in balance on the tightrope, balanced with his mother's training on the one end and Mary's assistance on the other.

Psychologists tell us that age is simply a matter of the habitual use of certain nerve-response patterns and that the way to remain young is to break up these patterns—one's routine—constantly. Huxley's book does this excellently. It made me, for instance, break out of old thinking ruts, *aus dem Felde gehen*, as it were. Every time I put the book down, ideas would swim through my mind in such rapid succession that I could not isolate them.

The language of the novel is forceful and expressive, to say the least. And whenever Huxley wants to remind us that one is compelled to recognize the body whether he desires to do so or not, he drags in another inter-course or seduction, complete with all the details.

This book has made me think. It has presented ideas that cannot be

simply accounted for and catalogued but must be pondered over to be rejected or absorbed as a part of one's thinking according to their worth. Rampion's words are vital and strong and have the ring of truth in them. If one wants to be jolted into life, he can read them and give thought to where he is directing his energy, whether he is becoming like the "decaying fragments of a little frog" or like the "noble savage." It is required reading for the half-dead!

### **Loose Tooth**

I had my first loose tooth on the night that my grandparents left on their trip to Wyoming. That was in 1929. It must have been before the "crash," for I remember going around through the crowd of friends and relatives and wiggling my tooth for big money, even quarters. The assemblage must have been quite cooperative in encouraging me in my undoubtedly great pain, for the entry in my bankbook is \$1.90. I can still vividly remember myself sitting on the dark stairs with the money clutched damply in one hand while I carefully worked at the tooth with the other. I must confess, however, that I didn't take out the tooth that night.—ELSIE BENNETT

### **Three Little Girls from School**

The three girls, though co-eds, certainly weren't the type you see on magazine covers. One was a shy, little thing that kept slipping down in her seat as if afraid that I might see her. She looked like a scared kid who hadn't done her home-work and thought the teacher was going to call on her. The girl nearest me had her blond hair tightly rolled against her head in a way that suggested an exaggerated sense of neatness and preciseness. The third girl was sitting alone—not by chance, but rather because she didn't leave enough room for anybody else. She was tall and heavy—the type of two-hundred pounder that Coach Zuppke would love to see on the team.—WARD DOBBIN

### **Doctor's Receptionist**

What free moments I had while being watchdog of the outer office were spent behind the scenes, giving the chief actor his cues. The doctor, I learned soon after starting, required more attention and nursing than his patients. For the sake of efficiency, I did everything from listening to boring accounts of his last six vacation trips to shopping for his special French-cuffed, extra-long shirts. When Dr. Martin became hungry before his lunch hour, it was I who gave up my time and I who had to pour oil on the anger of the waiting patients until he returned. And many an hour I spent pleading with him to attend this or that meeting, or to go to his afternoon clinic, when, with schoolboy stubbornness, he just didn't want to go.—MARGARET SCHULTZ



# Irrationality in *The Idiot* by Dostoevski

ISAAC LEWIN

*Rhetoric I, Theme 5, 1941-1942*

THE AGE OF REASON, AT LEAST IN ITS TOO SIMPLE form, is definitely a thing of the past; so much so that it lends itself already to historical classification. Its decline was brought about not only by adverse forces from without, but was caused also to a great extent by tendencies inherent in its own nature. In its triumphant search for rational interpretation, it finally succeeded in rationalizing away its own firm ground and in establishing a rather shaky fundament amidst fleeting, shadowy, and intangible realities. Let us recall the Theory of Relativity, the transmutation of elements, the atomic disintegration, the mathematics of uncertainties, the statistical behavior of substances, the interchangeability of matter and energy, and the field theory of matter in order to realize the direction in which science has been moving in the twentieth century. This development clearly indicates that the reality of our physical world does not consist simply of a *facade*, easily perceived by our senses, but that to its very nature belong certain qualities which can be termed elusive and as yet undeterminable.

A similar evolution can be traced in the field of psychology. Mind has ceased to be a simple entity composed of so and so many definite faculties. It has become in the hands of the psychoanalyst a chaotic mixture of conscious and subconscious, a bitter struggle between the Ego and the Id. Our beliefs and superstitions, our desires and behavior patterns are not only the outcome of our own personal education, but they are greatly determined by the experiences of our primeval ancestors. Many other startling phenomena, like instincts and intuition, have attracted our attention.

This is enough to convince anyone that the materialistic interpretation of the universe does not tell the whole story. If we dig deeper into either the atom or the human mind, we encounter problems which as yet evade our endeavor for solution. This, for the time being at least, establishes a tremendous field of phenomena which perplex our rational faculties.

It is the merit and achievement of Dostoevski to have pioneered into the irrationalities of the human soul. Literature before him, with the exception of *Don Quixote* and some Shakespearian tragedies, knew only of persons who behaved according to rational standards. If they did not, the causes for their misbehavior could easily be located and rectified, or they would simply be punished for their shortcomings.

Not so with Dostojevski's characters in *The Idiot*. Dostojevski recognized the powerful role of the instinctive in the human. He did not disregard those characteristics which make it somewhat difficult to assign the name *homo sapiens* to man. He was a realist; as he himself so cleverly said: nothing is as fantastic as reality. And we know that he wove his stories around newspaper clippings. He could not therefore shut his eyes before the contradictions, the queerness, the ambivalency of human nature.

If we think of Prince Myshkin, Rogozhin, Nastasya, and Aglaya, to name just the most important characters in *The Idiot*, we cannot help feeling at first that we are meeting very strange and eccentric people. It has been felt by many a reader, and it has been pointed out by many a critic, that in entering Dostojevski's world, one enters a world of mysticism, of dark forces. When we watch the dissection which Dostojevski performs on the human soul, we are stunned and puzzled by the intricacies which are revealed to us. We are unable or unwilling to identify ourselves with Dostojevski's types, all the more so, since most of his characters are drawn from a class of desperate people—drunkards, prostitutes, murderers, and failures. We then refer to the soul presented by the author as the Russian soul, and we denote therewith the alien, strange, and unintelligible nature of his heroes.

We could commit no graver mistake than to deny or not to be aware of the essential similarity between ourselves and Dostojevskian types. If we cannot recognize the universality of certain irrational elements in our inner make-up, we will completely miss the import of Dostojevski's philosophy. But every one of us, I am convinced, has a bit of Rogozhin or an Aglaya in him or her. We all have the experience of first loving and then hating the same person; we all pass through unexplicable moods; we all are tortured by unattainable desires; we all do things which we never intended to do; and we all have premonitions, hunches, and fears. These are some of the elements which Dostojevski brings to light. The light is indeed very bright, giving us an exaggerated effect. But, nevertheless, by venturing into the realm of the subconscious, by devoting his pen to the description of that side of man's nature which always seems to run counter to sound reasoning, Dostojevski makes it clear to us that that side is part of our normal attributes. Moreover, he does not stop there.

It might seem at first glance that it is the irrational forces in man which cause him to commit crimes, to spread tragedies, and to experience misery. This leads us to conclude, and quite validly so, that in suppressing the irrationalities and in living in accordance with reason, we might live a better life. But past and recent history has taught us the bitter lesson that this method is not quite successful. Dostojevski, while living in western Europe, realized this, and in criticizing western civilization he expounded his own philosophy.

This philosophy is fully contained in *The Idiot*. It is Dostojevski's



belief that the irrationalities in our nature drive us not only to criminal acts, but also to the loftiest deeds. Self-sacrificing love and disregard for materialistic advantage are certainly irrational. And it is precisely these elements which Dostojevski deems necessary in a renaissance of society and which he incorporates in his hero Prince Myshkin, the idiot. The author, significantly enough, calls him an idiot, a person devoid of rational powers, and he endows him at the same time with the seeds of a better society. The reader might think that Myshkin, although an idiot, is at least not gripped by those evil desires which torture the other heroes, especially Rogozhin and Nastasya. But Dostojevski, in order to forestall such argument, links Myshkin closely to the other characters. The author states expressly that Myshkin is not better than the others, and he makes him a spiritual brother of the scoundrel and murderer Rogozhin.

The message of Dostojevski is now clear: the irrationalities within man not only pull him down, but they also furnish the fanatical strength which help him to reach for the stars. And indeed, much of our progress has been prepared by dreamers, visionaries, idealists, and martyrs, who in all ages have been considered foolish by their more reasonable contemporaries.

We have seen that Dostojevski led the trend of our times by turning towards those problems which cannot be solved by a simple materialistic interpretation. He recognized the subconscious as a normal actuality long before the advent of psychoanalysis. Furthermore, he attaches to it intuitive powers and endows it with idealistic forces, making it thereby the cradle of the new man.

## Sunset

The raven-haired night  
Comes over the horizon  
In a sunset robe,  
And stills the day  
With the slow passion  
Of her embrace.

—TRYGUE JOHN MASENG

## Winter Work

I'm on my way to the woods. The far-off mass of trees is hazy in the half-smoke of falling snow, and across the intervening fields there comes a low, hoarse murmur that calls insistently. The moon breaks loose from the clouds, and runs a race across the sky, harried by ghost-like wisps of storm drift. The landscape changes to a brilliant white and black etching that has a poignant, inescapable sadness. The coldness of the night has an almost singing quality that pierces the brain and leaves strange thoughts to wander through the mind. I sigh, and move off in a swirl of snow, to walk the forest paths, and watch the moon, lashed with black branches.—TRYGUE JOHN MASENG

# Tar

ROBERT WRIGHT

*Rhetoric I, Theme 13, 1941-1942*

BEFORE ANY AUTHOR IS ABLE TO INDITE A LITERARY work of distinction, it is generally necessary that he know thoroughly and feel deeply—if not passionately—his subject. Mr. C. S. Forester, having been raised on the New England coast and having spent his childhood on boats of all kinds, knows and understands sailing ships; he knows the sea as a son knows his mother; he knows the men who sail the ships; and, above all, he knows the nomenclature of sailing ships, seafaring men, and the sea itself as few authors ever have. Forester has the sea in his blood and in his pen. Forester is—as are so many modern writers—meticulous about his factual data and his presentation of it.

*Captain Horatio Hornblower* is the story of an English youth of humble parents who chose the navy as a career—largely because Her Majesty's Royal Navy was the only profession that offered a poor lad an honorable calling with any immediate prospect of respectability; for in those pre-Napoleonic days the only way an impecunious stripling could achieve success (having no wealth or family to establish him in a lucrative business and being caste-bound by the British society of that period) was to go to sea—either as a merchant sailor or as a bluejacket. And Hornblower went to sea as an ensign on a ship-of-the-line. His ambition—to become an admiral!

This sweeping saga of the struggle of this man to better himself, despite forbidding handicaps, is a sea epic to thrill the most phlegmatic. Picture Hornblower not as a man of destiny or a swashbuckling adventurer, but rather as a man who has little faith in himself; a man who is a brilliant seaman and navigator; a man who often suffers seasickness; a man who possesses an extremely meticulous mind; a man who has tremendous mental courage and courage under fire, but little courage for physical combat. Picture, if you will, this man of undeniable ability, a leader of men (though he is not fully aware of it), who, once he calculates the odds of a venture and finds them in his favor, will fight like a fiend. Picture a man who has no faith in himself, yet will take chances the boldest would never even consider. Such is the character of Captain Horatio Hornblower—a character altogether human, altogether fascinating.

*Captain Horatio Hornblower* is a long book, as all books must be if the author has a broad topic and anything to say; C. S. Forester has a large topic, the sea power of a great nation—England—and a plethora to relate of the ships, the men, and the battles that made Britannia queen of the



waves. *Hornblower* offers a faithful, historical panorama of English naval power during the Nelson era—the press gangs; “the cat,” savage instrument of discipline with nine weighted tails; the brutal whippings; the terrible food; the bestial existence and horrible hardships of the common tar; the trials and tribulations of sea captains; the stubborn, pragmatic Admiralty.

People will like *Captain Horatio Hornblower* for its many fine qualities; romance, historical value, excitement, suspense; but I like *Captain Horatio Hornblower* for the picture of the sea and of seafaring men it gives the reader. Anyone who has ever been abroad has witnessed the power the ocean has upon the mind of man and could not have escaped the exaltation the greatest phenomenon of nature brings to all who journey upon the sea—unless, perchance, he is one of those unfortunates who cannot gastronomically abide motion that is not essentially rectilinear. The immensity and solitude of the ocean appeal to the mystic in many people.

In *Captain Horatio Hornblower* the sea battles, of which there are many, are exquisitely done. One can almost see Hornblower on his quarterdeck directing the cannonading, one eye on the weather gauge, his mind calculating drift, damage to his vessel, repair work, and myriad other factors. The main-mast is blown away. Hornblower hurls orders for a jury rig to be erected. Steerageway is lost. The enemy is closing; the carnage is terrific. The cabin boy at the Captain's side is decapitated by a direct hit. The jury is finally raised. The *Lydia* is back in the fight. The day is won.

I have tried, in the preceding paragraphs, to give a few reasons why one might find *Captain Horatio Hornblower* an interesting book, but there is one reason that cannot be over-emphasized. *Hornblower* is the story of a truly “human” character. Hornblower thinks and acts as people really act, not as moralistic writers are wont to make them act. He is beset by all the desires and passions of an ordinary individual. He is immensely talented. One cannot follow such a man through his life span and not become intensely sympathetic with his problems as well as his person.

### Their Solitary Way

My partner suddenly grasped my shoulder and gesticulated eloquently toward Pine Point. “Mary! See!” I spied there, swimming in solemn procession under the gnarled arms of the sentinel pine, three wild ducks. The sun made shimmering crowns of their jade topnots, and even the ordinary dull of their bodies seemed somehow brighter in the early morning sunlight.

Quick as a zipper one duck bobbed under. The second disappeared. And then there was one—one baffled little duck, who began circling around and around and peering under the water. “Quack!” he said, and with a flirt of his tail, under he went too. First one duck, then another, would pop up and then dive again. The tag game became so exciting that Helen and I began to lay bets on whether “Eenie,” “Meenie” or “Miny” would be “it” next. But our laughter startled them; and, as one, away they flew.—MARY J. KORITZ

# Bringing Up Baby

LOUISE PROEHL

*Rhetoric II, Theme 11, 1941-1942*

“AND THIS IS MY BABY.” THIS MARKS THE END OF EVERY family introduction. *I* am the baby—the tail end, the least ‘un. Not that my feelings are hurt—anymore. There was a time (I was thirteen and awkward) when I blushed painfully at this introduction, especially if the other person would remark, “My, but she’s a *big* baby!”

Of course, there must be a baby in every family. I do not mind representing our family in this capacity if I am accorded certain rights. But I’m not. It began long ago, even before I lost my first baby teeth at six. I was resigned to my fate of going to bed earlier than Elsa on every night of the year, except New Year’s Eve. I begged and pleaded to be allowed to watch the new year come in. Only once did it do any good. It must have been when I cried harder, screamed louder, and begged longer than at any other time.

I slept on the couch in the living room from nine o’clock to eleven-thirty (there were stipulations, of course; always give *and* take) when Paul poked me.

“Come on, if you’re going to get up. It’s eleven-thirty.”

“O. K.”

Five minutes later.

“Come on. Do you wan’ta see the New Year come in or dontcha?”

“Uh huh. Just a minute.”

Then, eleven-forty-five. My mother’s voice penetrated my deep sleep. “Let her sleep if she’s tired.”

My brother again. “Sure, I’ve given her a chance. That’s what I say, let’er sleep.”

And so I slept. The next New Year’s Eve found me in bed at nine o’clock.

That’s the way everything ended. When I wanted to play with my brothers and sister and their friends, they would let me “try out” their games. I would run slowly or hide where anyone could see me so that I could be “It.”

Then it would be, “Go on home. You’re no fun to play with.”

“I promise I won’t do it again,” I cried.

“Go on home and tattle on us. See if we care!”

I ran home sobbing and feeling very neglected. When my sister came home at length, she was told to take better care of me and play with me. But I wept as many tears the next day.



*Working* with my sister was another matter. It always turned out to be a Tom Sawyer affair. Often I found myself washing dishes minus a prized marble or a candy kiss. When I was sick with the measles, but well enough to sit up, I had to hem dishcloths. After that I usually took a turn for the worse when dishcloths were mentioned.

My parents, as camera companies so earnestly urge all parents to do, resolved to take lots of pictures of their children. They did a beautiful job with my brother. Every day in his childhood is recorded. When I ask, "Just what is there to record *my* childhood?" I am always given the vague answer, "Well, you know how those things go." The difference in the number of photographs grading downward from my oldest brother to me, is astonishing. Here and there are pictures on which I am included in a nice family group on Carl's graduation day or the girl friend's visit to Paul. In the former I am six years old, pigeon-toed, and toothless, and on the other, I am almost crowded off the picture by the girl friend.

With hand-me-downs I have come off no better than with pictures. It is lucky that I have two older brothers and only one older sister. How awful it would have been to be the fourth person to wear a dress! But then my sister is as hard on her clothes as two people, my mother says, so there is really not much difference.

The toy hand-me-downs were passed through three hands before they reached me. Yet they were fun to play with. There was a boxful of odds-and-ends of toy trucks and furniture and dolls in the kitchen closet. I preferred them to my new toys, and I had quite a few new ones. I kept getting them until I was definitely past the toy age. Perhaps my mother wanted to keep me as her baby a little longer; anyway, she gave me baby dolls and toy stoves for Christmas when I was sure I had reached the silk stocking age. My mother "babied" me more by putting bibs on me after I had learned to eat in quite a mannerly fashion. I also wore braids for a long time, perhaps to foster a sweet, innocent expression to counteract my tomboyishness.

If I was regarded as a baby most of the time, occasionally Carl or Paul would condescend to tell me a secret (I know now that it was never an important one), and I, pleased or shocked, would have to spread the news immediately. Their trust in me broken, the boys punished me by calling me a brat or by ignoring me. I tried to argue my way out by saying they would have told the secret anyway, but I never got far in an argument. In fact, I always came out on the bottom. We argued as to who should wash the dishes, who could go along to town, or anything not worth arguing about. Sometimes our arguments became quite active. We would gesticulate, arms flying and tongues lashing. Paul's long arms had the advantage here. Tweaking my ears or pulling my nose, he would send me howling in retreat. I had strong lungs and if the battle became one of shouting power, I could

occasionally win an argument. Only recently have our arguments become more intellectual. Several years ago I tried to start an argument on a higher level than dish washing by asking Paul, "What do you think about lethal gas? Pro or con?" I'll never be able to live it down!

My brothers and sister make fun of me, but I'm so used to it that I get fun out of it too. Only occasionally do they regard me as an equal. If they're "looking at the world through rose-colored glasses" and they wouldn't hurt a flea, I'm all right. Or if I have some money I could lend them or run an errand for them, I'm a "pretty peachy kid." I see through them and my only crumb of consolation is that I am not in that distinguished group of in-betweeners who are neither the oldest nor the baby, to which Paul and Elsa claim membership.

Speaking fairly, however, my brothers and sister are not so bad. They've done a good job of trail-blazing for me (unintentionally, undoubtedly) in getting permission to use the car, to go out, and so on. Then too, some of their hand-me-downs were very nice. The books were still legible when I got them, and one or two of Elsa's dolls even had heads.

Sometimes I forget all the troubles of being the baby of the family. I get a warm, protected feeling when I hope my brothers and sister are thinking kindly of me as their little sister—until I hear one of them mutter, "Brat."

## **Town Girl**

Don't feel sorry for me because I'm "just a town girl." I'm the girl who can come home from a hard day at school, kick off her shoes in the middle of the living room, and plop down on the couch for a peaceful nap—without a shocked housemother reprovingly dangling the shoes before my eyes, and bustling me off upstairs to my own two-by-four hole in the wall. And I'm the girl who doesn't have to worry about the "man at home" getting married.

—BETTY ANN HILL

## **Horrors and Super-Horrors**

A typical horror program consists of two or three mystery thrillers with such titles as "The Growling Ghoul," "The Corpse in the Closet," or "The Zomby's Revenge." Unfortunately the title is usually the only fresh thing about a picture of this kind. Actually only one horror plot exists. Plot Number I-A is the gruesome little tale of the madman whose main ambition in life is to maim or kill as many of his fellow men as possible. He usually succeeds in decreasing the population by five or six before being slain in the last reel. A variation of this story (Plot Number I-B) concerns the kindly, misunderstood scientist who is persecuted by society merely because he has slaughtered a half dozen people during the course of an experiment with mysterious rays. The poor man goes berserk in the second reel and proceeds to use his fearful discoveries to destroy mankind. At this point the plot swings back into Plot Number I-A until the last few minutes of the film. In the end the scientist repents his foul deeds, smashes his death-dealing machinery and dies.—JOHN E. RANDALL



# The Tyranny of Habit

EUGENE HOWARD

*Rhetoric II, Theme 9, 1941-1942*

EVERYONE HAS HABITS. SOME PEOPLE HAVE MORE good habits than bad habits and some people have more bad habits than good habits. Those who have too many bad habits must overhaul themselves occasionally, or they will get into trouble. You can't be too careful about a thing like habits.

Take, for example, my Uncle Fritz. He had the habit of going out to the corner tavern every night from eight until eleven o'clock. And a fellow named Clancy had the habit of coming to see my Aunt Martha (Uncle Fritz's Martha) every night from eight-thirty until ten-thirty. Then one night the tavern closed for remodeling. Now Clancy is in the cemetery, Uncle Fritz is in jail, and Aunt Martha is going out with Jake, the city dog-catcher.

A good friend of mine named Goldie had the habit of cutting out paper dolls. Everywhere she went she carried a pair of scissors and cut up everything in sight. A fellow reading the daily paper on the street car was likely, at any moment, to find himself holding a string of dainty paper figures dancing hand in hand. Everywhere were evidences of Goldie's work; advertising posters, handbills, tablecloths, window curtains—all fell victim to her habit. Soon she learned to make different kinds of dolls—fat, thin, long, short, and with hats, coats, noses, ears, feet, and arms. She tried to convince her friends that there were great possibilities in manufacturing and marketing her creations. A few weeks ago, I visited her at the State Hospital for the Feeble-minded. She was getting along fine and was enjoying her work very much; she is the institution's official barber.

Then there was my great-grandpa on my mother's side. When he was a very young man, he got in the habit of taking a brisk walk down the cow-path to the woods and back each morning before breakfast. When he was thirty-eight years old, they built a ship canal across the path, and he was obliged to swim a hundred yards a day; that is, he had to swim except during that part of the winter when he could walk across the ice. When he was fifty, they built a public school across the old path, and he had to crawl in one window and out another. Of course, he had to get the permission of the school board, but they didn't mind, since it was always very early when he went through, and he didn't interrupt classes. Then, when Great-grandpa was seventy-two, a railroad bought a strip of land across the old cow-path and built a water tower nearby. The 6:29 freight always stopped there for water, so he had to climb over the box-cars every morning. When they put

in four switching tracks and left cars on them for days at a time, he nearly became discouraged.

One morning a few years ago, when he was eighty-four, two men in working clothes carried him, dead, into the living room and laid him on the couch. It had been too much for him when he had found these workmen excavating in the old cow-path to lay foundations for the new fourteen-story National Bank.

## The Date

MORTON MOSKOV

*Rhetoric II, Theme 14, 1941-1942*

LUCY AND TOM CAME OUT OF THE DOWNTOWN CHAM-  
paign theatre and began to walk slowly toward the campus. Lucy was humming one of the tunes from the picture they had just seen; Tom was trying to remember the way back to the campus.

"George was right," said Lucy, as they passed the new fire-house. "You are the homey, studious type. That's why he asked you to take me out while he's in Chicago. He wants to be sure that I'm in good company."

"Thank you."

"Thank you? . . . Oh!"

Tom took Lucy's arm to guide her across the difficult intersection near the Illinois Central. When they reached the other side, he maneuvered himself, as a gentleman should, into the outside position.

"And besides, you're his roommate," said Lucy. "It's very nice of you to take me out for him."

"But I wanted to," said Tom reassuringly. Her humbleness made him uneasy.

Lucy tucked her arm under his. "You're cute," she said, "even though you are the homey, studious type."

"Aw."

"Tom, how do you like my legs?"

Tom swallowed hard. "Huh?"

"I won twenty-five dollars in a contest for having the most beautiful legs. See." Lucy stopped to display her draft exemptions. Tom glanced nervously about, hoping there was no one on the street to witness this atrocity.

"Well?"

"Er . . . ah . . . very nice," he blurted out.



They resumed their walk. Tom looked awkwardly ahead. Lucy watched him and smiled; she made him uncomfortable.

"Lucy."

"Yes?"

"Do you know where we are?"

"No, where are we?"

"I d-don't know."

Lucy laughed. "Do you always lead your dates astray?"

"We should have taken the bus." Tom stopped to turn around.

"Wouldn't it be fun to get lost together?"

"I must have taken the wrong street back at the station. I'm awfully sorry," he said.

"Oh, that's all right," she said, as they started back. "I have you to protect me." She squeezed his hand. Her hand was perspiring and it felt like a wet chamois. He tried to walk faster, but she held him back.

"Tom."

"Yes?"

"I'm cold."

"Huh?"

"Put your arm around me."

She did it for him. He wished he were home. He didn't like her—he didn't like George's even having such a girl friend.

"Why do you always say 'huh?'?"

"Huh?"

"Maybe I ought to be glad you're the homey, studious type," she said.

What did she want, anyway? He didn't like to be called "the homey, studious type." She was toying with him, and it made him feel inferior. Maybe she was laughing at him.

Suddenly he stopped and bent forward to kiss her. He was surprised to see her turn away.

She smiled. Then she laughed out loud. "Well, if that isn't the most clever technique I've ever seen! And to think that I thought you were bashful! You ought to teach George your technique."

Tom was mad. He bit his lip and didn't say anything the rest of the way. Lucy was talking, but he didn't listen to her.

They reached her house and she turned to say goodnight. She put her arms around his neck. "Aren't you going to kiss me?" she said.

"Y-yes," he muttered. And he did.

The next day Tom was crossing the campus toward Urbana, and he saw George and Lucy approaching from the opposite direction. George was trying to wash Lucy's face with snow, and they were both laughing. They saw Tom and, as he passed, they greeted him cheerfully. "Hi, Tom!"

"Hello," he mumbled, and, lowering his head, quickened his pace.

# Sugar and Spice and Everything Nice

DORIS JEAN METZLER

*Rhetoric II, Theme 10, 1941-1942*

JUDY AND I CALLED IT OUR COURTROOM, BUT ANYONE lacking our childish imagination would have had a hard time seeing the resemblance. The courtroom was a dilapidated hayrack which stood in the orchard north of Judy's home. The judge's desk was a rusty barrel of unknown origin which we had turned bottom-side-up.

Many strange scenes took place in our courtroom—scenes which no real court is privileged to see. One of these was the dissection of a three-foot water moccasin which Tom, Anders, Judy, and I had found during a hike through the woods. It was very much alive when we found it, and I was content to keep out of its way. I did make myself useful, however, by carrying ammunition—sticks and stones—to the other three warriors. After killing the snake and placing it on the end of a long stick, we trooped triumphantly home, discussing the best way to dispose of it. The two boys wanted to dig a grave for it, but Judy and I had other plans. We were not just certain what the plan was, but the courtroom was to play an important part.

Upon arriving in the courtroom, we stretched the dead snake out upon the desk. Judy asked for a pocketknife. Tom was bewildered, but handed it to her. Anders gulped and began to complain of a stomach ache. Up to this time my own ideas of what we were going to do had been vague, but now all was crystal clear. I admit I was not altogether in favor of the plan, but after seeing how Tom and Anders reacted I was determined to follow Judy's lead.

Judy took the knife in hand, turned Sir Snake on his back, chose a promising place, and cut. With one leap Anders was off the hayrack. He mumbled something about the height making him dizzy. After some difficulty—the knife was dull and the skin was tough—Judy succeeded in reaching the snake's inner passages. By this time Tom, too, had made a very awkward exit. He did not bother about an excuse. I stood by, giving Examiner Judy words of advice and encouragement, because now the task became delicate.

We used a small stick for exploring the snake's contents. The first thing to come to light was one small frog, in relatively good condition. The next object was the head of a field house, slightly battle-scarred.

We called to Tom and Anders, who had been trying to recover their self-



assurance, to come and see what we had found. They were rather hesitant at first, but upon seeing that Judy and I were still eager, they came. Just as they were close enough to have a good view of the operation, Doctor Judy pulled forth the rest of the mouse. This was too much. Anders began to turn green and to gulp noisily. Tom suggested that he needed a drink, so the two boys hurried to the pump house. As soon as Tom and Anders were out of sight, Judy and I began to feel shaky ourselves. Judy deftly pushed our "finds" through a hole in the barrel, and that was the last of Sir Snake.

## Stop Light

MERTON KAHNE

*Rhetoric-II, Theme 9, 1941-1942*

THE OLD CAR LABORED UP THE RISE IN THE ROAD. Ahead, at the corner, the green light changed to yellow, then to red. The sandy-haired youth jammed his foot down on the brake pedal, cursing softly. He peered out at the street sign.

"Division and California—damn! Three o'clock and two hours late. Boy, will I catch hell!"

At the corner street-stand, the newsboy rubbed his sleepy eyes, gazing anxiously to the south. At last he saw what he was looking for, and he ran to the middle of the street to catch the bundle of papers that was thrown from the rear of a careening *Times* truck. Carrying his papers back to the stand, he yawned slightly; then he rubbed his hands together in anticipation of the sales he would make in a few hours.

Across the street, two swaying men were engaged in a loud debate about whose turn it was to take the next swig of Four Roses. A little farther down the block, under the lamplight, a boy dragged on a cigarette and wondered how long it would be till the men were drunk enough to roll.

Out of the entrance to Humboldt Park, at another corner of the intersection, there emerged from behind the large statue of *Home*—a Civil War soldier on bended knee, embracing his little child—a young couple, the boy grimacing sullenly, fixing his dishevelled hair and loosened tie; the girl trying to smooth the wrinkles in her dress, glancing red-faced at the park patrolman who walked behind, swinging his night stick as if it were a baton.

The light turned yellow. The driver shifted to first. Slowly the old car responded to his touch. With a groan it moved slowly forward. The youth cursed as the exhaust backfire cracked through the morning air.

The newsboy looked up over the top of his stand, shrugged his shoulders, and went back to his tabulation of yesterday's profits.

# Sweat Shop

WILLIAM VANDERHOOF

*Rhetoric II, Theme 6, 1941-1942*

THERE IS NO MORE UNDESIRABLE WORK THAN THAT of a heater or a steel worker's assistant. Most people believe that sweat shops exist only in history; actually, we have genuine sweat shops in this "century of progress" or, if you prefer, this "century of mechanized madness." I worked in a forge shop last summer, and I developed an unspeakable hatred for it, with its antique machinery and slave wage. The thermometer reached 140 degrees every day, and, as one fellow said, "It's terrible to work here and lose all your religion, then die here and go to hell."

I lost ten pounds the first two days, and if I had not made a wager that I could stand the gaff, I believe I would have quit. One who has not seen such a place cannot understand the conditions. The steel is heated in furnaces until it is white hot, then is removed and placed on the dies of a large steam trip-hammer. As the hammer operator strikes the hot steel, an assistant douses the dies with grease and throws a stream of air on the forging to remove the scales.

The hammers are arranged in two parallel rows with an aisle between. There are seven hammers in each row, all in operation. My job was in the midst of these fourteen hammers, helping the "mule drivers" remove the finished forgings—where the thermometer was never lower than 140 degrees and often higher, where the black, oily, suffocating smoke of the die grease collected, where the hot pieces of steel scale were flying in every direction, where the noise was unbearable, where the earth shook with every blow of the hammers. Men who were only forty years of age but had worked at the trade for years seemed sixty. Why did they keep on? Because they hoped to become hammer operators and make one hundred dollars per week. As an assistant put it, "A hammer man is no one but an assistant with his brains burned out." Most of the operators who make such a wage are too broken down to enjoy it.

The only possible way to avoid passing out while working was to keep in the breeze of a fan and take a large quantity of salt tablets. I wore a wool shirt, overalls, heavy duty goggles, thick canvas gloves, and steel-toed shoes—all necessary to protect the body from burns and injuries. I have seen men sweat so much, even through all their clothes, that water dripped on the ground and their shirts were white from the salt which had collected as the sweat evaporated.

When the three o'clock whistle blew, we always managed to have the



furnaces empty so that we did not have to work overtime. Everyone punched his card and went upstairs to the shower room, where the stagnant odor of sweaty, dirty clothes, the wild curses of employees, and the steam of the showers, filled the air. Everyone's face was black and greasy and everyone was in bad humor. After eight hours of such labor one longs to get a steaming hot shower and some clean clothes on, then go to some cool, quiet, secluded spot to rest.

Although the forge shop is one of the most essential parts of our National Defense machine, there is no need for such sweat shops. For only a small per cent of the profit, the owners could better these conditions much. It is my belief that the owners should be forced to install such devices as smoke eradicators, proper heat-retaining furnaces, shields to force the steel scales downward, proper ventilators, and other minor safety devices. It seems only logical that if such improvements as these were made, the company would gain back more than the added expense in efficiency alone.

### If You Would Be a Stenographer

When the receptionist announces, "Mr. A. J. will see you now," for the love of heaven don't quiver in your boots! Walk across the threshold apparently perfectly poised; sit erectly in the chair offered to you and *smile*, not mechanically, but sincerely and infectiously—as though he were the most handsome gentleman you had ever seen. Speak distinctly; never make it necessary for him to ask you to repeat. Mumbling indicates fear or incoherence on your part, and such characteristics are not tolerated in the business world. Don't fight! Leave the corner of your handkerchief alone; show an interest in what Mr. A. J. says and be sure to remember it, for if you are employed he will expect you to apply his suggestions without further comment.—LOIS GAMET

### John Roger

In words John Roger could produce a vivid canvas, lifting the apparently insignificant into the realm of beauty and purpose. He might choose one of the narrow, dingy tenement streets of Indianapolis for his subject, and produce in words an illusion of beauty amidst ugliness. Hard, cold features became soft under a veil of mist. People walked, talked, and acted with purpose and meaning. The old and very grey façades loomed against the sky with new color. Each phrase he uttered seemed to shape some element of the scene into a beautiful pattern.

It was no wonder that the others of the class could offer him no real criticism of his work. They could not grasp his work because they felt their thoughts inferior to his. But let John Roger strive to represent his thoughts in paint and it lost its beauty; it became a more stilted drawing than any new and inexperienced art student might present.

John Roger, with all his talent, has never succeeded as an artist. The last time I saw him he was selling supplies in one of the local art stores, in slack moments still dreaming of the great canvases he longed to paint, but never quite knowing how.—CHARLES WEISENBURGH

# That Second-Hand Book Store

ARTHUR SWENEY

*Rhetoric II, Theme 9, 1941-1942*

JUST TWO BLOCKS FROM THE CORNER OF FIFTH AND Broadway, under a blazing red, handscrawled sign, I found a unique store. Pushing open the old, solid, paneled door, I looked over a dimly lighted room where here and there bookcases with their ancient literary inhabitants stood fast to the floor. It took but a moment to be reminded of the European stalls that line the Seine and the Grand Canal where tourists from all over the world stop to browse. Even the proprietor was foreign. A short, solid Italian, he called in struggling English, "If you don't see what you want, please ask for it!"

At this cry my attention was quickly turned to the readers in the shop. Down the aisle of magazines piled waist-high, a machine-worn workman, his lunch bucket balanced precariously under his arm, was squinting closely at a tattered book that might have been either a play of Shakespeare or *A Girl's Boarding House in Paris*. At the sound of the shop-keeper's voice, however, he slammed it shut and with the haste that sometimes is caused by a guilty conscience, he clumsily tried to stuff the book back into an already overcrowded shelf. Then with lowered eyes and his lunch bucket still balancing in the crook of his denim-clad elbow, he stomped out the door after fumbling miserably with the knob.

A slick art student with a rakish mustache was trying to find a diagrammed book of anatomy to help with his next study. He held every picture he came to at arm's length and scrutinized it with half-closed eyes and with head tilted from one side to another. As he strolled to the little counter at the front of the booth, his foot caught on the bottom of a pile of old *Saturday Evening Posts* and sent them slithering to the floor, like a snake disturbed from its slumber. He muttered a curse under his breath and slapped his volume and a coin on the worn box-top which was used as a counter and left with impatient haste.

This place seemed the haven of all classes and professions; it was a retreat where class distinctions could be overlooked because of the dominant common interest in books. Here not only Nino, with his broken English, but also DeMaupassant, Goethe, and Dickens were helping to unify the people into a better understanding of each other. As I left the shop, I looked over my shoulder and saw a red-headed Irish boy and a little Jew with their arms over each other's shoulders gazing at a book held between them. Nino was smiling and yelling, "If you don't see——." The words were cut off by the heavy door.

# Remember Pearl Harbor

MERTON J. KAHNE

*Rhetoric II, Theme 8, 1941-1942*

**K**ANYUTKWIN IS NOT A VERY PLEASANT PLACE TO BE this time of the year. The heat is almost unbearable, and the constant rattle of the *ack ack's* and the *soixante-quinzes* is enough to drive anyone mad. It's not very easy to sit here waiting—waiting for the first phase of the battle to subside, and the torn and broken bodies to be brought in for us to try to put together again. It won't be long now. You can't expect the boys to fight the enemy with songs. That's all they send us—songs.

This morning Tommy Adams was brought in. His arm and legs were badly torn. He had found a portable radio, and when we tried to take it from him he refused to give it up; he said that he just had to listen to news from home. There wasn't much more we could do for him. We fixed the radio up, turned it on, and listened. Between news broadcasts we listened to records of big-name bands playing popular songs. Some Aussies came in and sat with us. And then a torch singer began to sing the sickening words of "Remember Pearl Harbor." I couldn't stand the look on the Aussies' faces; humiliated, I got up and left.

Americans, all over the globe, were shocked by the attack on Pearl Harbor, but some of us did something about it! We didn't have to have some swing band playing sentimental music to inspire us. We realized that we were in a fight to preserve something we held dear—something we believed in. It didn't take cheap phrases to get us up in arms.

It isn't the first time this has happened: if it isn't "Remember Pearl Harbor," it's "Beat the Dirty Japs." Or some other tripe. I never thought it would happen; I never thought my country would cheapen the tragedy of Pearl Harbor. The heroism of the men over here isn't something to be degraded by the shallow woodenheads of Tin Pan Alley.

They talk about keeping up the morale. Do they think that men without guns to fight with can have any high morale? Do they think that hearing "We Did It Before . . . ." will make us feel better, when we hear of strikes and mismanagement and rotten politics at home? If the people at home would see to it that we are better supplied, they wouldn't have to worry about our morale. We have a job to do, we know that. Guns, not songs, win a war. Give us the guns—we'll do our singing when we've won.



# Shadows Along the Tigris

BARBARA LERMAN

*Rhetoric II, Theme 13, 1941-1942*

SHE WAS ODDLY ATTRACTIVE, HER LONG STRAIGHT nose and thin anemic lips giving her the appearance of an Egyptian sphynx. But it was her narrow green eyes which fascinated most people. I had often looked into those strange cold eyes, and they seemed like shrouds drawn over her soul. Yet once or twice I had caught those eyes off guard, and they were nervous as a deer's eyes as they searched anxiously across the horizon, far beyond the muddy waters of the Tigris, on whose banks, in Baghdad, I often met her as she strolled along.

Usually she was alone; but sometimes she was with a man, a tall, powerfully built man whose eyes, in spite of his occidental affectations of an Oxford accent and London-tailored clothes, burned like an oriental's. He was a strikingly handsome man—handsome, that is, until one tried to analyze his handsomeness. His was the face of a conqueror: a strong aquiline nose, a full sensual mouth set in a sardonic twist, and a jaw that was hard, driving, and relentless.

Standing together in the copper sand along the Tigris, under the shadows of palm trees drunkenly swaying in the evening breeze, each seemed oblivious of the other: she gazing over the horizon, reaching out, perhaps, to some far-flung star; and he, with his eyes narrowed to slits like the eyes of a snake waiting to strike at its prey, watching and waiting, waiting—but for what, I do not know.

## Flight One

As I drove out to the city airport I wondered just what I had let myself in for. I thought how much trouble a twenty-year-old kid could get himself into.

"I—ah—I—I want to learn to fly—I think." I heard myself address a sour-looking, wind-blown individual who evidently was chief pilot. He stared down at me with a look of contempt; then he looked up into the blue as if to say to some guardian of the sky, "Oh, my God, look at this—another one."

"Is it all right if I wear glasses?" I asked.

"Can you see through them?"

"Yes."

He shrugged his shoulders in reply and walked over to a little yellow plane. "Get in."—L. H. KORNMAN

# Bernhardt or Barnum?

MAX HENCY

*Rhetoric II, Theme 11, 1941-1942*

WHENEVER A PERSON DISCOVERS A NEW ELEMENT, writes a book that threatens to out-sell the Bible, refutes Einstein's theory, or establishes communication with Mars, he is invariably approached by an inquiring reporter who asks, "If you could meet any five living people, whom would you choose?" And the famous one answers, "Winston Churchill, Adolph Hitler, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Joseph Stalin, and Greta Garbo." Of course, the reporter may vary the question somewhat and ask, "If you could choose from all of history five people to invite to a dinner party, whom would you select?" In which case the answer is Julius Caesar, Napoleon Bonaparte, William Shakespeare, Adolph Hitler, and Greta Garbo. The person amassing such a list fails to realize that Garbo probably wouldn't come, but whether she came or not, the fact that she was invited would add infinitely to the host's prestige. On the other hand, there may be one or two people who have never learned to read and who have never gone to a movie, and they might wonder upon hearing the list, "Who is this Garbo?" Of course, they haven't heard of Shakespeare either, but they don't like the sound of his name, so they confine their curiosity to Garbo.

Well, it all started because once upon a time not too long ago—in 1906 to be exact—there was a Swedish blacksmith, or maybe he was a butcher, named Sven Gustafson.<sup>1</sup> Sven was very, very poor, and when another little girl was born to Sven and his good wife, Ana, who already had one boy and one girl, it looked as if there might not be enough food to go around. But Sven worked very hard, and Ana loved the little baby very dearly. She named her Greta Louvisa because she thought it sounded poetic. As the years went by, Greta Louvisa started to school, but she was tall and gangly and the other students made fun of her. Then one day Sven died, and someone had to go to work because Sven left his family very little money.

Although she was only thirteen and the youngest of the children, Greta Louvisa was the one who sought employment in order to support the family. Her first job was in a Stockholm barbershop where she had to lather customer's faces and keep the towels hot. It was very hard work, but Greta did not despair. Then one day she got a better job in a department store. The manager of the department store saw her and realized she was pretty.

<sup>1</sup>Churchill, D. W., "Legend Laughs," *New York Times Magazine*, IV (Jan., 1940), 34.

He asked her if she would like to make a short movie advertising the store's hats. She was afraid to refuse, so she made the movie.<sup>2</sup>

Then the fairy godmother saw her. Well, he wasn't exactly a godmother, he was more of a godfather, but the results were the same. And this godfather wasn't exactly a fairy either; he was a Swedish movie director named Mauritz Stiller. He asked Greta if she would like to make movies for him, and she said she would.

Then the godfather cast a new picture. Suddenly, magically, skinny, awkward Louvisa Gustafson became slender, graceful Greta Garbo, star of European movies. But then a funny thing happened. The fairy godfather was called to the enchanted city of Hollywood, California. He said he would not go unless he could bring his new star with him. The men in Hollywood argued, but they finally agreed because they wanted him so badly. And so Greta and her fairy godfather sailed on a big boat for the United States.

When they arrived in Hollywood, Greta was ignored, but her godfather insisted that she be given a picture, and so she was cast in *The Torrent*. Then again the magic thing happened, and Louvisa Gustafson became an even greater star. Unfortunately the godfather did not do so well for himself, and he returned to Sweden. But our Cinderella was so famous she could not leave. She stayed on and became the most beautiful, the most famous, and the most talented actress in the world. Then one day she met her handsome, dashing young prince, and he fell madly in love with her.<sup>3</sup> But she had known many other men, so she didn't marry him and lived happily ever after.

And that is the story of the Swedish Cinderella, Greta Garbo.

But how Garbo became a great star and stayed a great star are two different stories. There is no doubt, however, that she has had an exceptionally long and brilliant career.

After fifteen years of murderous competition that has seen the rise and fall of this and that beautiful and talented newcomer, Garbo is still the Hollywood nonesuch. Faintly middle aged and in her hugely unexciting private life a bit of a frump, the hefty spinster from Stockholm, judged by any standard you like, is still in the top spot. Any of a shoal of rivals would willingly commit murder to inherit it.<sup>4</sup>

Is it and was it her acting that kept the public clamoring for her? In the early days of her career, Garbo's appeal was completely different from what it is today. When Garbo first flashed across the screens, she was noted for her torrid love scenes. She was the Lana Turner of 1925.

<sup>2</sup>Cleve, F., "Greta Garbo, the Woman Nobody Knows," *The Living Age*, CCCXL (June, 1931), 369.

<sup>3</sup>"Film note: Greta Garbo," *New Republic*, LXXII (Sept. 29, 1932), 176.

<sup>4</sup>Churchill, *op. cit.*, 48.



Men like Greta Garbo because she represents a type of romance they have never seen or experienced before. Women like Greta Garbo because she has a technique of love-making they would like to learn.<sup>5</sup>

But as the years went by and Garbo became established, she gained a reputation as an actress—a great actress. No longer was she associated only with passionate love scenes. Her pictures received almost universal acclamation from the critics. The advent of sound on film enhanced rather than diminished her appeal. By 1932, she was being hailed as one of the world's greatest actresses, and she was being favorably compared with Bernhardt and Duse. Excerpts from reviews of that period reveal the high opinion critics had of her ability.

Who but the supreme Greta Garbo could bring to the screen this strange exciting personality, Mata Hari?<sup>6</sup>

So far *Grand Hotel* is the supreme picture of the year . . . its compelling magnetism is inescapable . . . Garbo playing in a cast which includes the Barrymores, Joan Crawford, Wallace Beery, and Lewis Stone is completely triumphant as if she were without competition . . . the role of the tired unhappy dancer is her greatest achievement.<sup>7</sup>

The aforementioned successes, however, were followed by such films as *Queen Christina*, which the *Nation's* critic found "too arty," and *The Painted Veil*, which was "a poor story with even poorer acting on the part of Garbo."<sup>8</sup>

Recently her career has had some very decided ups and downs. A high spot as far as histrionics are concerned was *Camille*. Garbo was hailed as one of the greatest Camilles of all time. But that picture was followed by *Conquest*, which was a tragedy in more than one way. Never at a loss, however, Greta followed that with one of the greatest pictures of her career, *Ninotchka*, and proved herself a comedienne as well as a tragedienne.

As the Bolshevik envoy who comes to Paris, she displays, in her change from a dour fanatic to a lovable woman, such deft comedy, such shy humorous grace that M-G-M's *Ninotchka* scores a new high in cinema satire.<sup>9</sup>

When Garbo tried comedy again, however, in *Two-faced Woman*, the results were disastrous. Many critics considered it the worst movie of the year.

Seeing Garbo in this movie is worse than seeing a fine actress make a fool of herself; it is like seeing your mother drunk!<sup>10</sup>

But whether her work is good or bad, whether the critics boo or applaud, Garbo's pictures continue to draw huge crowds. Is it her acting that intrigues

<sup>5</sup>Condon, F., "Greta and Marlene," *Saturday Evening Post*, CCIII (May 30, 1931), 56.

<sup>6</sup>"On the Current Screen," *Literary Digest*, CXVII (Jan. 13, 1934), 34.

<sup>7</sup>"On the Current Screen," *Literary Digest*, CXX (Sept. 21, 1935), 21.

<sup>8</sup>Troy, W., "New Garbo?" *Nation*, CXXXIX (Dec. 19, 1934), 722.

<sup>9</sup>"Portrait as *Ninotchka*," *Theatre Arts Magazine*, XXIII (Nov., 1939), 764.

<sup>10</sup>"Portrait," *Time*, XXXVIII (Sept. 11, 1941), 49.

the public? But Helen Hayes and Tallulah Bankhead are also fine actresses and they failed in films.

Acting ability alone is not enough to keep the silver flowing into the box office. Therefore Garbo has seen to it that the public has got more than its quarter's worth from her. While her screen performances have been good, her off-screen performances have been even better. For twenty years the world has thrilled to her three-ring circus featuring mystery, eccentricity, and romance.

How the Garbo enigma was ever started no one seems to know. Some say it was in the early days of her career when she had a poor command of English and consequently could not give interviews. Others insist that it was an outgrowth of her natural shyness.<sup>11</sup> But no matter what the origin, it became one of her greatest assets. The public loves a mystery.

And because of this, the world was continually thrilled to learn that even Garbo's boss didn't know where she lived, that she liked to walk in the rain, that she took solitary swims in the ocean and watched the rising sun.<sup>12</sup> Stories about her shyness came in for a great deal of news space. One story is always current, that of the famous person who hid in a closet for three hours just to get a glimpse of the divine Greta. Garbo's rare public appearances are almost national events, and one candid shot of the camera-smashing Swede is worth a hundred of almost anyone else.

Garbo, however, was not content to remain merely a beautiful enigma. She added a ring to her circus and became the beautiful, eccentric enigma. Many stories have been written about her idiosyncrasies. Editors are always willing to give a paragraph to Garbo's food habits: buttermilk and cheese for breakfast; carrots, spinach and some other vegetable for lunch; and a large onion sandwich for dinner.<sup>13</sup> Needless to say, some of the stories about her aren't true. Her supposedly shabby clothes have also been a very interesting item, as have her old cars.

Garbo is reputed to own one car, a 1927 Chevrolet coupe in which she drives herself to work each morning.<sup>14</sup>

Another item which thrilled a gullible public a few seasons back was one concerning Garbo's appearance at an opera. The article told of the arrivals of all the stars in their expensive limousines, and then it related how Garbo came walking down the street, wearing an old pair of slacks and a sweater her mother had knitted for her, and took her seat in the balcony.<sup>15</sup> There were many such stories, but . . .

<sup>11</sup>Condon, F., *op. cit.*, 104.

<sup>12</sup>Churchill, D. W., *op. cit.*, 47.

<sup>13</sup>Churchill, D. W., *op. cit.*, 48.

<sup>14</sup>Condon, F., "Lady who lives behind a wall," *Saturday Evening Post*, CCIII (May 29, 1931), 45.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, 121.

Much that has been written about Mrs. Gustafson's little girl, Greta, is what is known chemically as baloney with a slight precipitate of hokey.<sup>16</sup>

In spite of the thousands of words written about her mystery and eccentricity, Garbo was not content, so she added another publicity-getter to her bag of tricks. Whenever one of her pictures was not too good there would be a Garbo romance. In the early days, her career was given a healthy boost by a love affair with John Gilbert. Then she met a grandson of King Gustaf. The prince was very much in love with her, and Garbo got her all-important publicity. When *Queen Christina* was released, Garbo eloped with the director, Rouben Mamoulian, and the world eagerly awaited a wedding announcement which never came. After *The Painted Veil*, Garbo was linked romantically with George Brent. Then came *Conquest* and her idyl in Italy with Maestro Stokowski.<sup>17</sup> The people read such items as this: Greta milking cow named Emma while Stoky held Emma's head; Greta contentedly stroking the white nose of a llama while Stoky picked fresh white camellias, presented them with condoctorial bows to my lady of the Camellias.<sup>18</sup> But as all others, the Stokowski affair gained a lot of publicity for both members and then died a natural death. Recently Garbo has been connected with a diet specialist, but that romance promises to end like the others. Greta is truly the world's most celebrated celibate.

And so for twenty years, Greta Garbo has given the public a terrific show, and even now she shows only signs of improving with age. Where else is there a better show for a quarter?

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<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>17</sup>Churchill, D. W., *loc. cit.*

<sup>18</sup>"Idyl," *Time*, XXXI (Mar. 14, 1938), 51.



# “With the Waving of Flags”

ROBERT ERWIN BERRY

*Rhetoric II, Theme 7, 1941-1942*

MAX AND HIS WIFE OWNED A LITTLE CANDY STORE on North Baggott. It was just a cubby-hole of a place, between the Liberty Cleaners and Mueller's Hardware, but Max and Greta, with characteristic German thrift, so economized on space that the candy store occupied the front part of the building and their living quarters the rear.

Max has been what you might call an “institution” in Rushville, particularly to the children. I remember well when, as a grade schooler, I experienced the excruciating pleasure of trying to decide whether to spend my penny for a stick of licorice which would make black spit like chewing tobacco (an invaluable aid in playing Cowboys and Indians), or for one of Greta's home-made all-day suckers, which came in the enticing shapes of teddy-bears, rabbits, and misshapen monkeys. That was years ago, and my place in front of the fascinating glass cases has been taken by some other nose-pressing urchin, but the candy store is still, or was, I should say, until last January 11, the most exciting stop for the school-kids on their way to and from school.

Max and Greta came over from Germany in 1925, and opened their little store in Rushville on the Fourth of July that year. “We want we should start American,” Max explained proudly in his newly acquired language. The little store was literally swathed with red, white, and blue bunting, and a huge American flag was hung proudly in front of the building. That night Max shot off what was to us children a breath-taking array of fireworks, while Greta stood in the doorway of the shop with her hands over her ears, smiling bravely.

The little candy store never did what you might call a voluminous business—not even the time when Mrs. Clark, the mayor's wife, ordered eight dozen taffy apples as favors for a banquet given at the county orphanage by the Woman's Club. Still the pennies and nickels that Max took in exchange for Greta's delicacies was enough for the two of them—even allowing for the *Pfefferküchen* Greta gave to the *liebchen* who didn't have pennies. Greta was crazy about children—all kinds of children. Their only son, Hans, had died in the Great War, and Greta kept his picture in back of the counter. I remember it distinctly in its heavy, old fashioned frame with the German and American colors draped over the top. It rested upon a little table behind the counter and just under the hand-carved wooden clock that chimed every

half hour. It was a game we used to play to try to be in the shop every noon to hear it chime twelve times.

The two never went out much. At first they were embarrassed because their English was so awkward, and then, too, they were naturally reticent. The townspeople weren't unfriendly to them—it was just that they and the townspeople didn't have much in common. They didn't play bridge; Max didn't know baseball, and Greta was too shy to try to get in the "Aids" and "Societies." When they weren't working in the little kitchen Max usually sat out in front of the shop or at the front window in the sun, smoking an old-fashioned curved pipe that he had brought over with him from the old country, and Greta would busy herself tidying up the little shop or else knitting or darning in a huge black rocker just inside their parlor. Max's pipe fascinated me. It had a long curved stem, and the bowl was carved like a man's face. I always secretly thought that Max and his pipe looked much handsomer than my dad and his nickel cigars.

Max was proud of being in America. As soon as he and Greta had learned to speak and read fairly well they began studying so that they could apply for their citizenship papers. They still loved their fatherland, but, as Max told my father, "We live in America, so is we should be American citizens."

When Hitler rose to power the old couple reacted to him much as the average Americans they lived with did. They didn't like him or what he stood for, but they came gradually to accept him—as the rest of us did—as a sort of necessary evil. Of course the letters Max received from his relatives in Germany gave no hint of criticism of the Hitler government, and this very fact may have allayed his misgivings. "I do not like it. I do not understand it," he said to me once, "but my brother, my cousins—they do not complain." No one was more stunned than they when Germany declared war on America. Max had been worrying about the war in the old country all along, but it had seemed to him, I suppose, as to all of us, vague and very far away. When the declaration hit, with all its fury and significance, it never occurred to Max and Greta that their sympathies could lie in two directions—they automatically assumed the loyalty of Americans.

But the townspeople were different. When the American's normal pace of life is disturbed, he looks for a scapegoat. And so the people of Rushville turned upon Max and Greta. They forgot about the big American flag Max proudly displayed whenever he got the chance; they forgot about the old couple's love for children; they forgot that Max and Greta were studying for their papers; they forgot everything in their war fever—everything but the fact that Max and Greta were still technically German. The reticence of the couple became furtiveness; their friendliness became cunning; the letters Max wrote became spy information; and with the characteristic

imagination and exaggeration of a small town, the people began to picture Max as the most notorious of German secret agents.

At first the change in the townspeople's feelings was barely noticeable. Then Max observed that the children didn't stop to look in the shop windows any more. The orders for bridge favors stopped coming in. And when Greta went down to the little store on the corner for her weekly groceries every Saturday, she couldn't understand the strange looks the other customers gave her. "I don't understand what has happened to these people," Max said to me while I was home Christmas. "Greta and I have done nothing, and yet they do not speak to us—they have nothing to do with us!" And so things grew more and more strained. To Max and Greta this was all very puzzling. After a while Max began to understand. But what could he do even then? You can't just run up and down the streets shouting, "I'm not a Nazi spy! I'm just like you! I'm a loyal American!"

Then the other night a mob broke into the little store. A mob made up of people like your neighbors. *My* neighbors they were. Just who they were I don't know and I don't want to know, but I can't be sure that any of my friends were innocent. Was Mr. Johnson one of them—Mr. Johnson, who used to pay me dimes for running errands from his drugstore? Was George Clark one of them—George, who always led the Legionnaires in their holiday parades and who spoke to our graduating class on "The American's Creed"? Or Roy Davis, who donated a prize every Fourth of July for the best oration on "Liberty, Equality, and Justice"? Or Mr. Tomlinson, or Mr. Wilson, or Bill Grant?

Whoever they were, they broke into the little shop, and they called themselves "patriots." They told each other, and they told the police afterwards, that they were looking for concealed weapons or short-wave sets. But they didn't have to smash the glass cases to see that none was hidden there; they didn't have to rip Hans' picture from the frame to see that none was hidden in its back; they didn't have to throw all of Greta's candy on the floor to see that none was hidden under the trays; they didn't have to shove the old couple out of the back door into the cold in their nightclothes while they "searched" the bedroom—searched, by cutting the mattress to pieces, ripping clothes apart, and turning furniture over. And what hurt Max most of all was the note they left pinned to the door: "We don't like Nazis here! Go back where you came from!"

While I was home mid-semester I walked down by the little shop on my way to town. There was no jovial Max sitting on the familiar old bench at the front window, smoking his long curved pipe. The building was dark and the once shining cases were shattered and dusty. Max and Greta had gone—they had moved to the home of Greta's sister in Minnesota. They will live there until they get their call to be sent back to their fatherland, or



to be put in a camp for enemy aliens. And as I stood there with my face against the glass, peering into the empty shop, something bright on the wall in back of the counter caught my eye. And then I recognized it—a sampler which had hung there as long as I could remember—which, probably, Greta had worked out patiently with her own hands for that grand opening of the store on July 4, 1925. How many times in my childhood I had spelled out those words, before I had more than a vague notion of what they meant. In the dim light of the shop I could hardly see them now, but the last time in red yarn against the white ground, was clear: "with Liberty and Justice for All."

## Rhet as Writ

If torpedo planes are attacking the ship and no aircraft protection is present the battleship is in very grave danger because anti-aircraft guns cannot do very much because the torpedo plane does not have to fly over the ship to torpedo it because a torpedo can travel for some distance in water.

. . . .

I feel that I can better fulfill the desires of others because I have learned to work for instructors as well as people.

. . . .

Before entering school as a freshman, I had the desire to get married. No more do I wish to marry after seeing the beautiful girls on the campus of the University of Illinois.

. . . .

I do not consider excessive eating as a characteristic of a pig because pigs eat huge amounts of food as a matter of necessity, but I eat for enjoyment.

. . . .

The dictator would kill off all the maimed and sickly young people, and do the same with all the others with venerable diseases.

. . . .

He was a painter in Italy and had remarkable skill in reproduction.

. . . .

If there had been more teachers of her calibre, I'm sure that I would have succeeded in attaining still greater fame in this world of today.

## Honorable Mention

- Eugene Ague: *Murder in the n<sup>th</sup> Degree*  
Merrill J. Alexander: *Salvaging the Lusitania*  
Roy Augensen: *Learning to Navigate*  
Ferrel Allen: *Muscle Science*  
Robert Erwin Berry: *An Experiment in Socialism*  
James Breckenridge: *Government Corn and Parity*  
Gene Brucker: *Poland—Europe's Problem Child*  
Valerie Christiansen: *If You Want to Shout*  
Andrew Dennis: *Editorial Reaction to the First World War*  
Dorothy Ensing: *The Two Devil's Islands*  
Jack Felsman: *The Steam Must Go Through*  
Barbara Fox: *Ethical & Political Ideas*  
Thelma Geifman: *Vitamin A*  
Lori Gitlitz: *Telephonitis*  
Martha Goodwine: *Rachel Field*  
Edmund Habicht: *A Mind Trainer*  
J. B. Hatch: *Vipers*  
Alvin Herscovitz: *Albert Einstein*  
H. Herzog: *Isolation*  
Eugene Howard: *I Ran for Cheerleader*  
Albert Kaufman: *The Squeeze*  
Ralph LaRock: *Vermont Granite*  
Bert Grover Lichtenstein: *Snakes Revealed*  
Donald Lustfield: *A Dream That Nearly Came True*  
William Meehling: *Censorship of War News*  
Jack Meredith: *The Cyclotron Promises*  
Helen Dean Miller: *Democracy at War*  
Marion Mitchell: *Pioneer Spirit in the West*  
Louise Proehl: *Youth before the Law*  
Charlotte Rothschild: *Wise Youth*  
Martha Louise Royce: *The Maya—Mystery of the World*  
James Sanner: *The Union Building*  
Mildred Shattuck: *Dear Lonely Heart*  
Virginia Shirley: *Hanging Gardens of Babylon*  
Clarence Sparks: *The Automobile of Thirty Years Ago*  
Richard Wyrzimalski: *Decline of Chivalry*







